GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:676
ANSWERED ON:21.11.2007
NEW TB DRUG
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Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Tuberculosis Research Centre, Chennai has developed a new drug for TB, making it possible to treat all the diseases of Multidrug Resistant-TB (MDR-TB) within two-three months;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of success achieved by the Government-sponsored TB programmes?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS)

(a) No, Sir.

(b) The TRC is currently involved in the designing stages for a new TB drug being developed by pharmaceutical company Johnson & Johnson for use to treat patients with multi -drug resistant tuberculosis. The TRC is also planning a research study for a new TB drug being developed by an Indian Pharmaceutical company, Lupin Ltd.

(c) To control TB, with an objective to achieve cure rate of 85% of new sputum positive cases and to detect at least 70% of such cases, the Revised National TB Control Programme (RNTCP) widely known as DOTS, which is WHO recommended strategy, is being implemented in the entire country. Under RNTCP diagnosis by sputum microscopy, instead of X-ray, helps in detecting and curing infectious cases on priority. Facilities for diagnosis by sputum microscopy have been decentralized and strengthened. Drugs are provided under observation and patients are monitored so that they complete their treatment. Drugs are provided free of cost in patient-wise boxes. Till date, the RNTCP has placed more than 78.00 lakh patients on DOTS treatment, averting more than 14.00 lakh deaths. Every month more than 1.0 lakh patients are placed on DOTS. In 2006 alone, India placed around 14.00 lakhs cases on DOTS, more than any country in a single year in the world. Overall performance of RNTCP has been excellent with cure/treatment completion rate consistently above 85% and death rate reduced to less than 5%. To increase accessibility of the masses to the facilities provided under the Programme, special emphasis is laid on the IEC activities, involvement of NGOs, private sector and medical colleges in the revised strategy.